



## Special Education Advisory Committee Draft Meeting Minutes

LCPS Administrative Building, 21000 Education Court, Ashburn, Virginia 20148

SEAC Community Engagement Activity, 6:00 – 7:10 p.m., Business Meeting 7:15 – 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 4, 2022 - Live [Stream](#) Recording

### Community Engagement Activity:

#### Presenters:

### Development of the Division Wide Equity Statement

Lottie Spurlock, Director of Equity

Michele Frosina, Instructional Facilitator, Culturally Responsive Instruction

Traci Townsend, Supervisor of Equity

Background Information: Want full stakeholder input rather than just a Superintendent statement

Purpose: Pause to hear from stakeholders, not just feedback, want input upfront. The Equity Statement will provide clarity internally and externally and demonstrate how we show up for every child in LCPS and staff member.

Different stakeholder groups: Student equity ambassadors, equity committee, principals, student/teacher advisory, MSAAC, SEAC, Equity leads

### **Business Meeting Agenda, 7:15 p.m.**

1. Welcome and Call to Order, Sharon Tropf, SEAC Chair
  - a. Remote participation for 4 SEAC members is approved with a majority of members present.
2. Public Comment.
3. Reports and Updates.
  - a. SEAC Chair Report.
  - b. 4-6-2022 Minutes approved and will be posted to SEAC Webpage
  - c. SEAC webpage has been completely redesigned and has meeting minutes, PTA-PTO talking points, subcommittee agendas, minutes, etc. The outstanding items that have not been posted are the SEAC published documents, these include policies recommendations and other SEAC voted upon recommendations. The SEAC bylaws, membership applications, and public comment documents are also posted in Spanish.
  - d. Career and Technical Advisory Committee, SEAC needs a representative to attend these meetings, the meetings are held in morning 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month.
  - e. Community Concerns, Currently Investigating.
    - a. Special education students denied access to supports for after school extracurricular activities
    - b. IEE updated guidelines (Policy & Compliance subcommittee will review and provide feedback)
    - c. Meaningful Inclusion remains a concern across LCPS
    - d. Escalating student behavior concerns, direct support for students, trained behavior aides
    - e. Team taught teaching model: SEAC appreciates the elementary and middle school teams that came and presented at the April SEAC meeting. The Policy and Compliance Subcommittee is still gathering information about consistent implementation and core





expectations of the model across LCPS classrooms. SEAC has received mixed feedback from the community, noting marked inconsistency across the county at the middle and high school levels.

- f. Speech therapy services: SEAC has received feedback from private speech therapists and special education parents that speech services are being denied and drastically reduced. SEAC is concerned with service capping.
  - g. Budget reconciliation: Covid funds will be used to maintain teacher positions as well as provide for virtual elementary school. SEAC has received concerns from the community regarding the combining of self-contained programs, lack of teachers, losing the CAST placement at Academies of Loudoun, mental health/behavioral health not being addressed in the IEP.
  - h. SEAC Annual Awards: 63 award winners, winner announcement will be posted by Friday or Monday. Annual Awards Ceremony is June 1 at 6:30 in the Riverside High School auditorium. The SEAC retractable banner is in the design process.
  - i. 2021-22 SEAC Annual Survey: SEAC received feedback from the special education department on the survey questions. The Executive Committee is reviewing and incorporating agreed upon recommendations. Membership will test the survey prior to being published. Hoping to have the survey published within next two weeks.
  - j. Supplemental Annual Reports has been provided to School Board, released April 26, 2022. These reports need to be posted to SEAC webpage.
  - k. Looking for vendor to analyze 2020-2021.
  - l. Quarterly Report to the School Board, April 26, 2022: SEAC Chair shared current top concerns: 1. teacher shortage and early resignations, 2. Special education classes with no special education teacher, 3. Student behavior – insufficient mental health support. SEAC receiving reports of teacher and student injuries, 4. Capping of covid recovery services, these services ended regardless of need, and 5. IEP teams unable to provide support for students who need it.
  - m. State SEAC Update: Looking for a Region 4 State SEAC Representative.
- f. Executive Committee.
- g. Nominating Committee: Jeanine Pepper, Nancy Walker, Shehnaz Khan.
- Reading of positions:
- Chair – Sharon Tropf
  - Vice Chair Planning – Shehnaz Khan
  - Vice Chair Membership – Sarah Kimberly
  - Vice Chair Communications – Craig Metz
  - Secretary – Katherine Rosenbrook
- h. Slate vote is unanimous.
- Dr. Nelson, Special Education Director, does not support the slate due to the SEAC Chair living out of state. Will follow up with division counsel for a final decision on this. Andrew Hoyler, SEAC Liaison to the School Board, there were no issues with the legality, the charter does not specifically mention that the person must be a Loudoun County resident so there were no concerns of legality. However, it was a board initiative that did not allow





a resident of Maryland to participate in the Equity committee so there is precedent. Lots of discussion from the floor, Virginia Regulations and SEAC Bylaws governing SEAC do not specifically mention that committee members have to be a Virginia or Loudoun County resident. LCPS School Board approves SEAC membership. Lorraine Hightower, SEAC past Chair, SEAC is a regulatory committee with bylaws, nothing in bylaws state members have to be residents. We need clarification from VDOE. Donna Smith, Assistant Director of Special Education, points out that this is a local advisory committee. Melissa Waugh, SEAC member made a point of clarification stating there is nothing in SEAC bylaws preventing non-Loudoun County resident from being a SEAC member. Shehnaz Khan, SEAC Vice Chair of Planning, LCPS has parents and teachers who live/work in different areas, we do not want to restrict our membership. Heidi Bunkua, outgoing Vice Chair of Membership, LCPS legal council did review our bylaws prior to SEAC membership ratification. Craig Metz, SEAC Vice Chair Communications, is concerned that Special Education Director and SEAC Liaison does not support the SEAC membership vote, support was not requested, lack of support not determinative, this is not a message of collaboration, if you have this concern, this was not the appropriate way to share it. Feels blindsided. Staff does not have veto power and setting LCPS lawyers on the issue sounds like they are setting up for a fight not for the betterment of the system. Is this the relationship we all want to have? Dr Nelson: choice of words was a mistake, it is not she (Dr. Nelson) who gets to choose or have a voting right, rather concern is that Sharon is not a resident in a local committee meeting which represents the voice of the residents in the community and will follow up with the state and she retracts statement, she values collaboration and appreciates work we do on daily basis and apologizes for using the wrong wording. Sarah Kimberly, Sharon is part of our community, she is an integral part of our community and the only person who stepped up to be Chair. Lorraine Hightower, as a past chair this is a very difficult role to fill, it is in addition to other roles of employment, support Craig's comments, Sharon has full support of the members. Craig Metz moved to make a motion that the SEAC supports Sharon Tropf's continued membership and chair, and respectfully requests that Dr. Nelson defer this issue and SEAC study it for the timeframe of next year's slate, so that we can work together collaboratively to answer this question and heal what is already looking to be a bit of a conflict; Seconded by Shehnaz Khan. Motion carries.

i. Subcommittees.

- Meaningful Inclusion, Liz Crotty agreed to chair. A co-chair will need to be identified.
- Transition subcommittee: March 22 meeting had a great turnout, report from Sarah Conlin, VCU grant SOS, 5 years, DARS pays for 4 students working toward an advanced studies or standard diploma, research-based outcome, brief everyone next school year. There are free VCU online courses, get ready for career, get ready for college. There were questions about transition handbook – it's a Schoology program (not a handbook), would love for it to be shared and communicated in IEP meetings. It would be great if it is broken by different ages/stages, by standard diploma, workplace readiness. Feedback status of developing 3-5 and 5-8 CII (community-based instruction) it is happening ask





schools about them, in previous school years, students would go to grocery store, learn about it, and then create something, parents should reach out and ask about it.

- Policy and Compliance subcommittee: Will be reviewing the new LCPS guidelines for IEE; review team taught models; 2 policies 8220 (suspension policy), 8350 will be reviewed and brought to membership in October. Policy 8220 is the suspension policy. It will be a busy summer.
- Specialized Reading subcommittee: Met twice this school year. Next meeting May 11 at 5:30, appreciate Beth Robinson attending and look forward to meeting Katherine Niell; topics 5350 included parental notification for screening and assessment guidelines when benchmarks aren't met were put in place and shared at SEAC meeting; ways to identify struggling readers; dyslexia, new curriculum review; capacity of teachers K-12 to meet needs including dyslexia; decision matrix that supervisors should be using; specialized math (multisensory math), actively recruiting for that position; multisensory writing curriculum for students with dyslexia.

#### 4. Liaison Reports.

##### a. Parent Resource Services.

Leanne Kidwell, there are no more workshops scheduled for this school year, but busy planning for next year, see you in August!

##### b. School Board Liaison.

Andrew Hoyler, looking forward to presenting awards at the Annual SEAC Awards Ceremony; SEAC funding, there was a discrepancy with how SEAC's balance was being read but it has quite a few thousand more than realized. Better late than never. Budget: A number of items that were going to be cut from budget will be funded by Covid Relief Funds, VA state budget is completely in flux right now, which makes planning really difficult, \$20M unspent funds from this year from vacant positions, can use this money for single purchase items for next year's budget; excited that elementary virtual learning was approved using Covid Relief funds; policy review process Dr. Smith, LCPS new Chief of Staff is concerned over length of time SEAC requires to review policies. Staff would like feedback within 14 days. This is not reasonable, so we need to find a middle ground for all committees to speed up the process, but SEAC has the right and responsibility to review policies. 2 months is too much, hopefully we can find middle ground. SEAC voices need to be heard and involved.

Sharon Tropf, SEAC Chair stated, a meeting can be set to see if we can speed up the process, but SEAC needs to have membership vote on policy recommendations coming out of the Policy and Compliance Subcommittee, sometimes membership agrees with subcommittee recommendations and sometimes they do not, and changes are made based on SEAC membership input and vote prior to being presented to School Board. SEAC recommendations comes through the vote, individual members are not the voice of SEAC.

##### c. Office of Special Education and the Department of Student Services.

Dr. Nelson extends greetings from Dr. Jones, looking forward to seeing everyone at awards ceremony. Introduced Dr. Daniel Smith, Chief of Staff. He was previously the Principal at Lake Braddock HS in FCPS, will work on policy review timelines with SEAC. Dr. Smith stated, he is excited to be here and will work to make sure SEAC sees all the policies.





5. Old Business.

- a. Review of the previously reviewed 2022-23 Annual Plan - only update is proportionate set aside, services have been enhanced to include transition ages 14 through age of eligibility, parentally placed private placements and homeschooled students. Feedback from SEAC created a lot of dialogue.
- b. Craig Metz moved we accept Annual plan, Seconded by Shehnaz Khan and was adopted by consensus. Donna Smith shared the Annual Plan is adopted by school board. Craig Metz shared he still would like to vote. Approved unanimously.

6. New Business.

- a. One new member application was submitted to the school board for appointment.
- b. Charter subcommittee for Meaningful Inclusion to be defined by its co-chairs. Motioned by Craig and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Shehnaz Khan. Approved unanimously.

7. Adjourn 8:26 p.m.

**SEAC Leadership:**

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| SEAC Chair                     | Sharon Tropf       | <a href="mailto:SEACChair@lcps.org">SEACChair@lcps.org</a>                                     |
| SEAC Vice Chair Planning       | Shehnaz Khan       | <a href="mailto:SEACViceChairPlanning@lcps.org">SEACViceChairPlanning@lcps.org</a>             |
| SEAC Vice Chair Membership     | Heidi Bunkua       | <a href="mailto:SEACViceChairMembership@lcps.org">SEACViceChairMembership@lcps.org</a>         |
| SEAC Vice Chair Communications | Craig Metz         | <a href="mailto:SEACViceChairCommunications@lcps.org">SEACViceChairCommunications@lcps.org</a> |
| SEAC Secretary                 | Kathryn Rosenbrook | <a href="mailto:SEACSecretary@lcps.org">SEACSecretary@lcps.org</a>                             |

**SEAC Liaisons:**

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|---------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| LCPS Staff Liaison, Director    | Patricia Nelson | <a href="mailto:Patricia.d.Nelson@lcps.org">Patricia.d.Nelson@lcps.org</a> |
| School Board Liaison            | Andrew Hoyler   | <a href="mailto:Andrew.Hoyler@lcps.org">Andrew.Hoyler@lcps.org</a>         |
| School Board Liaison, Alternate | Atoosa Reaser   | <a href="mailto:Atoosa.Reaser@lcps.org">Atoosa.Reaser@lcps.org</a>         |

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